

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently amended) An isolated or purified oligopeptide or polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence with at least 94% identity to SEQ ID NO:13.

25. (Previously presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 24, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 05.

26. (Currently amended) An isolated or purified oligopeptide or polypeptide, comprising an amino acid sequence in which from 0 to 4 amino acids are substituted, deleted or inserted as compared with SEQ ID NO:13.

27. (Previously presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 26, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 05.

28. (Currently amended) An isolated or purified oligopeptide or polypeptide comprising at least ~~5~~ 6 consecutive amino acids from SEQ ID NO:12, and wherein said amino acids comprise ~~comprise~~ at least one of the amino acid found at positions 73, 78, 112, 122, and 139 of SEQ ID NO:12.

29. (Previously presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 28, comprising an amino acid sequence chosen from SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:14, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:21, and SEQ ID NO:22.

30. (Previously presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 28, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 05.

31-32. (Canceled)

33. (Previously presented) A composition comprising at least one immunogenic molecule comprising one or more oligopeptides or polypeptides as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31, and optionally further comprising one or more HBV immunogens.

34. (Previously presented) A method of preparing the oligopeptide or polypeptide as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31, which comprises culturing a cell and expressing the oligopeptide or polypeptide in said cell.

35. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the oligopeptide or polypeptide is isolated from the cells and separated from other oligopeptides or polypeptides.

36. (Withdrawn) An antibody which binds to the oligopeptide or polypeptide as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31.

37. (Withdrawn) The antibody as claimed in claim 36, which binds to an oligopeptide or polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence with at least 94% identity to SEQ ID NO:13 with higher affinity than to HBs antigens belonging to genotype A, subtype adw, of hepatitis B virus.

38. (Withdrawn) The antibody as claimed in claim 36, which does not bind to HBs antigens belonging to genotype A, subtype adw, of hepatitis B virus.

39. (Withdrawn) An antiidiotypic antibody which represents an amino acid sequence as defined in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31.

40. (Previously presented) A kit for detecting hepatitis B viruses, comprising at least one of (i) an oligopeptide or polypeptide as Claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28,

29, or 31; (ii) an oligonucleotide or polynucleotide encoding said oligopeptide or polypeptide; and (iii) an antibody which recognizes said oligopeptide or polypeptide.

41. (Withdrawn) A method for detecting a hepatitis B antigen, comprising (a) incubating a sample with the antibody of claim 36 under conditions which allow the formation of antigen-antibody complexes; and (b) detecting antigen-antibody complexes.

42. (Previously presented) A method of identifying antibodies directed against a hepatitis B antigen, comprising (a) incubating a sample with an oligopeptide or polypeptide as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31, under conditions which allow the formation of antigen-antibody complexes; and (b) detecting antibody-antigen complexes comprising said oligopeptide or polypeptide.